

## Burns Randy

---

**From:** Crownover Shirley  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 24, 1997 9:04 AM  
**Subject:** 9/23/97

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

September 23

3:45 P.M.

A meeting of the Economic Development Committee was called to order by Councilman Crockett, Chairman, with Councilpersons Hurley, Swafford, Rutherford, and Hakeem being present. Councilmen Taylor and Lively joined the meeting later. City Attorney Randy Nelson, Management Analyst Randy Burns, and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Adm. Dinsmore, Mayor Kinsey, Adm. Boney, Adm. Marcellis and Steve Leach joining the meeting briefly.

### HIXSON PIKE IMPACT STUDY

Chairman Crockett stated this meeting was called specifically with one purpose which was to look at a proposal previously mentioned about Hixson Pike and another Impact Study for more information about the widening of Hixson Pike. He mentioned a zoning case in March involving apartments and development and stated the residents of the area had expressed concerns and were asking for a Study. He stated a Resolution had previously been introduced to the Council about widening Hixson Pike, and he did not bring it to the Council because we were in the middle of a Study at that time. He explained that the issue had been researched with support of the neighborhood and also some initial work had been done to develop issues, and Chairman Crockett stated the widening comes up at every community meeting--that there are questions as to whether this should be a five-lane or a different design; that there are other questions; that some business leaders wanted commercial zoning; and others were interested in how this would be designed.

Chairman Crockett stated there would be a Public Hearing September 30th conducted by the State on this issue. He stated that two hearings in the neighborhood primarily involved the Planning

Commission. Chairman Crockett stated this was his district, but he would have the same concerns if this were happening elsewhere. He mentioned that the State had not been terribly positive about this.

Chairman Crockett noted that another issue was the economic impact that would result from the widening of the road, as the same effects had been felt in other parts of our city when we shift the tax base. He mentioned the impact on commercial districts, noting that he had boarded-up businesses in his district now. He emphasized that we had had no Study where we could ask these questions or get answers to these questions. He mentioned in the course of the Public Hearing by the State there would be a 30-90 day period and we could analyze with the help of an Impact Study in that same period of time and be able to work with facts and not just opinions in dealing with the economics and from a tax base standpoint.

Chairman Crockett stated that he had asked the City Attorney to draw up a trial Resolution, which everyone had a copy of and which is made a part of the minute material, authorizing this Study. He stated he would ask first for the Public Works Adm. to review for us the road widening plans point by point.

Adm. Marcellis stated the widening would be from Masters Rd. to the city limits (Hideaway Drive); that it would be five-lanes with curbs and gutters; 12 ft. lanes with two-way left hand turns. He stated the time table was in the summer or fall of next year.

Chairman Crockett asked if this was the first phase. Adm. Marcellis stated this was the only phase he knew about. Chairman Crockett stated he thought the second phase takes it to the next major intersection which is Dallas Bay. Adm. Marcellis noted this was not as yet funded.

Councilwoman Rutherford asked how much of Hixson Pike in the City is two-lane and would remain two-lane. Adm. Marcellis stated one and one-half mile was basically a two-lane facility. Councilwoman Rutherford questioned this Resolution being deferred until we have provided what we need to do about widening this one and one-half mile. Adm. Marcellis noted that we would need traffic signals and other little things. Councilwoman Rutherford asked if the City did not widen if we would have a bottleneck. Adm. Marcellis responded "yes", if the traffic grows; that he had not gotten any answers on this.

Chairman Swafford asked if it were unlikely that the State would do this. Adm. Marcellis expressed doubt that they would leave a gap.

Councilwoman Rutherford questioned if there were a number of subdivisions that fed into this one and one-half miles. Chairman Crockett explained that it was between two golf courses. Councilwoman Rutherford verified that there were houses that fed into this. Chairman Crockett agreed, noting that they front Hixson Pike; that development is already occurring and the County is rapidly sewerage. He mentioned a large, open tract of 700 acres right on the left; that one of the concerns was with the five lanes and sewer and fire services and with that much infrastructure in place, that this would probably be a rapid development zone. Chairman Crockett noted that they had a new Eckerd's there now, and it was pretty predictable that

development would happen, and we needed to know what the real impact would be--what would it mean to the County taxbase and to city residents if we shift a lot. He stated that there was a whole lot of ground to be covered between the widening of the road and not widening, concerning the design and policy issues, and he felt this needed to be debated now.

Councilwoman Hurley stated that she thought we should include other marginal areas of the city in the Impact Study--that there is possible expansion anywhere we have a major artery going from the City to the County.

Chairman Crockett responded that he would say yes to this; that we needed to look at this long-term; that we had only grown marginally in population; that we needed to know how much real growth we have in terms of the tax base; that he had not been able to get answers, and he felt it would be valuable to understand the impact of the decision. He stated he would not like to see this held up but to be gotten in a timely fashion.

Councilman Swafford stated that he thought this was very reasonable, too; that it would give us an idea of how we can look at buildings and savings of the City in general. He mentioned the expansion as far as E. Brainerd Rd. that was not completely funded.

Councilwoman Hurley asked Chairman Crockett if he had any idea about the funding. Chairman Crockett noted that we had a cost from one source which was a group we had had contact with before Christmas. He stated that the cost would be dependent upon the level of complexity of the Study, and he gave an estimate in the range of \$50,000 to \$75,000.

Councilwoman Rutherford stated that if we did the Study, she would want it done correctly. She stated she knew we had talked about this in regards to the sales tax. She stated she thought it should be a City-County effort and that Claude Ramsey and Dave's counterpart in his district should be involved if we were going to shift around. She asked Chairman Crockett if he had spoken to Claude Ramsey or Charlotte Vandergriff about this.

Chairman Crockett stated that Councilwoman Rutherford was right, but he did not feel this was a City-County issue; that it was an issue for all of us and was not just locally--that it was happening everywhere, and we did need to understand the financial information from the County's standpoint, and he hoped they would want to participate.

Councilwoman Rutherford stated she thought the Council should ask

Mayor Kinsey to make contact with Claude Ramsey; that we should have a meeting about this with the County present; that she thought we would be wasting money if we looked at this just from the City's viewpoint.

Mayor Kinsey stated first of all that the widening of this road by the State was going to happen and would happen whether we do anything or not. He noted that at the Public Meeting on September 30th the design of the road would be discussed, and this could be a gateway to the City. He stated we needed to see how we can make this widening in the proper fashion so that it would not be a detriment to the City. He reiterated that it would happen!

Secondly, he stated we needed to know as a city what is going to happen. He noted that the MPO had changed their policy in that they were not forcing funds to go into new roads, which was freeing up funds. He stated we needed to know not only county-wide but also city only. He stated he was not sure how he came down on involving the County and the State. He ended by saying that the road widening needs to be the best it can be--that it was happening.

Councilman Swafford indicated that he felt we should have some conversation with the County and State; that he thought it would be good for them to join in, but it was also something we needed to look at as a City if no one joins in--that we should not cease our plans because no one wanted to join in, and we needed this information whether the County or State joined in or not, stating that he hoped they would work with us.

Councilwoman Hurley again stated that we needed to look at the comprehensiveness of it--that she would hope the cost would not triple or quadruple by broadening the scope; that as a border City we have a lot of challenges, and this was a very interesting issue. She stated she really applauded Chairman Crockett for taking this initiative and understood the expediency of this. She stated there were really two issues; that speed was important, and we needed a comprehensive package and something that our Planning process could model.

Chairman Crockett stated that he thought the added cost would be fairly small, and he thought broadening the picture could be done, and we could see how we are doing as a County and City; that an Impact Study would tell us on this particular project what this will mean, and he also concurred with the broader concept.

Councilwoman Hurley stated she did not know what size city is the right size city--at what point do you stop growing and not grow

anymore. She stated she thought this concept could be the beginning of the focus of the Study.

Chairman Crockett reiterated that he liked the idea of doing it broadly; that he hoped if this is done we would see the fiscal impact, and he wanted to see numbers; that if we lay the numbers on the table both the public and governmental bodies will make a rational decision; that MPO changing its mind helped; that how we do things had changed dramatically in the last 5-10 years, and we needed to see which path we will take.

Councilman Hakeem asked if he could gather from what was being said that a "large sucking sound" would take place. Mayor Kinsey responded that he would not say a "large sucking sound", but the road would be widened.

Councilman Hakeem stated he was known for his skepticism and questioned if this could be encouraging metropolitan government in allowing our tax base to be shifted into the County.

Mayor Kinsey stated no city dollars would be involved.

Councilman Hakeem stated that businesses would be shifted into the County and questioned if this would be encouraging that type of exodus.

Mayor Kinsey responded that he did not think it would make a difference in this area of town. He stated that he did not think changing East Brainerd from a two-lane to a five-lane would make any difference on anyone's decision on where they would live, and he thought this would also hold true on Hixson Pike. He stated that Corridor "J" was a great example where there had not been tremendous growth.

Chairman Crockett stated there could be a very dramatic shift; that it might be conjecture on his part but throughout most of our discussions we had never had any basis on which to point at something for all to look at.

Mayor Kinsey stated he was trying to answer Councilman Hakeem's question; that he thought this was worthwhile; that he had seen significant growth outside the city, but he did not feel that any level of congestion in our city would prohibit people from moving; that he did not think this would make any difference.

Councilman Lively stated he did not think we could dictate to people where they will live; that if we refuse to build arteries to the City, people would develop their own cities and put their businesses where they were living.

Chairman Crockett stated this was a fascinating argument--that roads are not the only issue; that we also have fire and sewer services. He questioned why Hidden Harbor did not want to become a part of the City, noting that we had no fiscal Impact Study.

Councilwoman Hurley stated that the mark of a good salesman was to stop when they were ahead. She moved that the Council ask for a proposal from this company about the timeline and cost of this Impact Study--that the first step would be a comprehensive plan, and she thought this should be done rather quickly. She stated this was the best way to prevent urban sprawl and that what MPO did today freed up some of the resources to do this. This was seconded by Councilwoman Rutherford.

Roswell Schnur of Chairman Crockett's district spoke next. He stated one of the things Councilman Crockett mentioned was Big Ridge. He stated there had been a lot of development down to the Chester Frost Park area; that there are houses there; that from Masters Rd. to the City limits it will be a five-lane. He noted his business was on Cassandra Smith Rd., and people needed to be assured they could turn in safely; that if we had more lanes, traffic accidents could be avoided; that the Planning Commission realized that with businesses we need additional road capacity.

It was determined that the action of this community was to determine how much the cost of the Study would be. Councilwoman Hurley stated this would be the cost of the broader concept, and they should come back as quickly as possible to this committee with the figure.

Councilman Hakeem asked if this committee or Administration would ask for this figure to be provided. Councilwoman Hurley stated it would be Administration's responsibility.

Chairman Crockett again stated that the estimated cost was from \$50,000 to \$75,000 and broadening it would make it more than that.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.